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July 17, 2000

Mr. Robert Pitofsky  
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Federal Trade Commission  
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Dear Chairman Pitofsky:

I read the cigar health-warning story of June 26 with greater interest than most and respectfully recommend you consider adding, "eye damage" to possible "cancer of the mouth, throat, and lungs" on the upcoming labels for cigar containers. My late father, Reade Tilley, O.D., was a 1913 graduate from the Southern Illinois College of Optometry and opened his practice in Clearwater, Florida soon after. During practice over some years he found positive evidence relating eye damage to cigar smoking.

In those days cigars were very popular and even more so in age group where glasses were normally required. In 1928 on my 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, my father cautioned me never to smoke, as it would damage my eyes. He went on to explain having examined well over a thousand male patients in 15 years he had noticed in those who smoked cigars, the eye on the side of the mouth in which he habitually lit and carried it had, in almost every case, proven to have poorer vision than the other. As age increased in progressive examinations he found this became more pronounced. The habitual procedure of cigar smokers locating the cigar on the same side of the mouth, according to the individual preference, all the time and frequently puffing while it was in the mouth, removing and replacing it just occasionally, proved to be the clue that pinpointed the source of damage to my professionally perceptive father. Cigarette smokers did not provide such a clue as they usually held them in the hand away from the face and eyes much of the time taking puffs occasionally, and removing them from the face area between puffs. Not withstanding my father

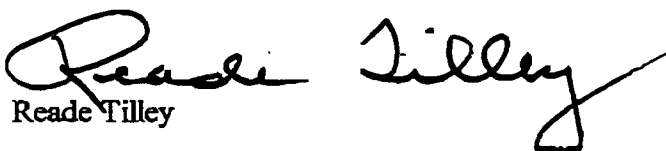
suspected all tobacco smoking would be damaging, he warned all his patients and crusaded against it until retiring after almost 60 years of practice.

In recent years I have explored the possibility of recognition for my father's discovery. Dr. C. M. Harris, M.D., a Captain in the Navy Reserve and highly respected ophthalmologist at Orange City, Florida, has taken an active interest in the project. He discussed it with colleagues at national professional organizational meetings and with corneal specialists who agreed that the cornea of the eye exposed on a chronic basis to cigar smoke could be damaged. They knew of no specific studies to substantiate this, however. Dr. Harris suggested this might be a worthwhile subject for research. They explained universities carefully control research projects and various eye organizations have their pet projects such as diabetes, metabolic deficiencies, and keratorefractive surgery and treatment as priorities.

It is clearly evident that the official recognition cigar smoking is damaging to the health, along with cigarettes, by your authoritative and prestigious organization will open the way to research sponsorship by health organizations and universities where the nature of their endeavors is directed toward the preservation of vision. Dr. Harris was away when this was written but should have returned by the time you receive it. I think in the light of your announcement, he would be pleased to share with your Commission the benefit of his thinking on this subject to date. His telephone number is (904) 272-2020 and I will copy this letter to him accordingly.

I would appreciate more than I can say knowing if there is interest on the part of the Commission in this proposal which I think you must agree can add new and important ammunition for your continuing battle in the interest of national health.

With thanks and best wishes for continued success in your vitally important endeavors,

  
Reade Tilley